



Points on acupuncture

Dear Sir:

I have 3 points to make apropos the correspondence (Can Vet J 1999;40:840–841) on veterinary acupuncture, pardon the pun!

Acupuncture/Traditional Chinese Medicine is described as “empirical.” It has the advantage over Western Medicine of being based on accumulated observations over many centuries of the natural world, that is, one not dramatically changed by human achievements.

Science recognizes that the prescience of the observer may modify the interpretation of the events or subjects being observed. Intrusive, specifically directed, investigational scientific methods may yield different infor-

mation compared with more passive observational approaches. It is interesting that retrospective studies of large groups of cases seem to be becoming more popular.

There may be magical and mystical qualities to acupuncture and to the world in general. A scientific perspective may not be the optimal one from which to appreciate such qualities.

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Veterinary homeopathy — be openminded!

Dear Sir:

While reading the Letter to the Editor from Drs. Ramey, Imrie, and Bowles (CanVet J 2000;41:3), in rebuttal to Dr. Wanda Vockeroth's article on veterinary homeopathy (CanVet J 1999;40:592–594), my first response was to chuckle, as did she (CanVet J 2000;41:3–4). Such a purely critical summary of homeopathy, on the heels of criticism of acupuncture by the same threesome, seems to me to be rather small of them and rather deserving of nothing more than laughter. However, on deeper reflection, I see this mini-debate less as something to chuckle over and more as something from which we can all gain a little wisdom.

I am a conventional veterinarian in the process of metamorphosing to a homeopathic practitioner and loving every minute of it. However, not only must I shift my own paradigms (which has been a lot easier than I thought it would be), I must also contend with mindsets such as the ones exemplified by Ramey, Imrie, and Bowles. This is not meant to be a critical comment. Any person coming to a new realization or belief must do so of their own accord and in their own time. It cannot be a forced process. There is nothing wrong with having a certain viewpoint, but it must be remembered that the mind, like an umbrella, works a lot better if it is open.

My personal belief is that just as there are many ways to “skin a cat,” so too are there many ways to practise the healing arts. If homeopathy is truly a failure, I am uncertain why it is now entering its 3rd century or how it is that I am obtaining excellent results with many cases, even as a fledgling homeopath. It is not working for everything, but then my early cases after

graduating from veterinary school did not always have successful outcomes either. If allopathic medicine were the be all and end all, there would not be a trend for both clients and practitioners alike to seek other approaches to healing. Both are valid disciplines of medicine, each with its devoted followers, with many others dabbling in both or several modalities.

While I can't speak for everyone, I imagine that, as animal healers and protectors, we all have the same end in sight, that being, a happy, healthy animal. In striving to that end, I would hope we are not only filling our days with our “job,” but also maturing, both as individuals and as a professional group. Letters written in the tone of Drs. Ramey, Imrie, and Bowles, cutting as they are, do nothing to help this maturation process. Mature awareness is only possible when we have digested and compensated for biases and prejudices that develop from our experiences. As ideas are presented that are strange to us, perhaps unbelievable, it behooves us to set aside our present needs, past experience, or expectations of the future, which inherently determine what we perceive, and allow our minds the chance to evaluate new ideas with a clean slate.

I wish to thank Drs Ramey, Imrie, and Bowles for protecting the rest of us from false notions we may acquire when we read of something other than conventional medicine. I feel so much safer now!

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